

STAFFORD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Agenda Consideration

TOPIC: Adopt-A-Classroom

ITEM NO: 10E

PREPARED BY: H. Charles Wood
Assistant Superintendent of
Financial Services

MEETING: February 24, 2004
ACTION DATE: March 9, 2004

ACTION REQUESTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT: That the School Board approve participation in the Adopt-A-Classroom program and authorize a one-time fee of \$12,500 that is guaranteed to be raised by this program or the difference will be refunded to Stafford County Public Schools.

KEY POINTS:

School Board member Robert Belman requested that staff look into the Adopt-A-Classroom program and make a recommendation to the School Board concerning participation in the program.

Founder and Executive Director of Adopt-A-Classroom James Rosenberg developed this program that recognizes how much money teachers spend out of their pockets for school supplies.

The program's objective matches community business partners with classrooms. Each partnership requires a minimum \$500 donation, 100 percent of which goes to either the classroom of the donor's choice or to an underserved classroom in the donor's community as selected by Adopt-A-Classroom.

The teacher uses these funds to purchase supplies and resources to increase student success. The funds are transferred to teachers electronically via e-wallet accounts from which teachers access funds to purchase supplies and resources online. Adopt-A-Classroom captures the purchasing information and remits back to each donor an itemized invoice detailing exactly how the teacher used the funds.

With teacher-generated initiatives, a successful adoption rate of 10 percent is recognized by current teachers (from other states) that participate in this program. If collaborated on a district-wide level and based on current statistics from other localities, a successful adoption rate of approximately 75 percent is recognized.

While no fee is charged for teacher-generated initiatives, a fee is charged for district-wide initiatives. Based on the number of Stafford County Public Schools (24), Executive Director James Rosenberg has quoted a one time fee of \$12,500 should the School Board elect to participate on a district-wide level. Mr. Rosenberg feels confident that a minimum of \$250,000 will be raised for classroom teachers compounded annually (if initiative is

continued). He **GUARANTEES** a minimum of \$12,500 will be raised and, if not, the difference will be refunded to the county.

Attached is an in-depth initiative to explain the process should the School Board elect the district wide initiative. Also attached are letters of reference from other localities who participate in this program.

Adopt-A-Classroom will provide partnerships among community members and classrooms and enrich classroom curriculum. If additional information is needed, please feel free to visit their web site at www.adoptaclassroom.com

SCHOOL BOARD GOAL #3: Encourage parents and the community to increase their interest and involvement in schools.

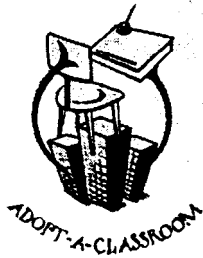
SCHOOL BOARD GOAL #6: Introduce programs to enhance employee status, within the school division and the community at large, so that employees are aware of their value to school and community.

FUNDING SOURCE: School Operating Fund, Emergency Contingency Fund

AUTHORIZATION REFERENCE: Not applicable.

Adopt-A-Classroom

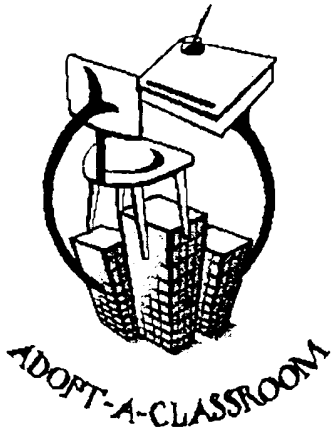
Stafford County Public Schools



Helping Communities Help Schools™

[REDACTED]

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ADOPT-A-CLASSROOM STAFFORD COUNTY INITIATIVE



Introduction: Adopt-A-Classroom is uniquely positioned to assist Stafford County Public Schools harness the resources of the community to provide critical funds for the county's public school classrooms. Most excitingly, the initiative can be facilitated without placing any additional work burden onto staff or administrators of the Stafford County Public Schools. Adopt-A-Classroom manages the entire process from start to finish.

Adopt-A-Classroom recognizes how much money public school teachers spend out of pocket and how demoralizing it can be. The objective of the initiative will be to raise a minimum of \$250,000 (approximately \$10,000 per school) for classroom teachers compounded annually. This number should increase with each year the Stafford County Public Schools desires to continue with the initiative.

About Adopt-A-Classroom: Adopt-A-Classroom is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in Miami, Florida. The program matches community partners with classrooms throughout the nation. Each partnership entails a \$500 donation, 100% of which goes to either the classroom of the donor's choice or to an underserved classroom in the donor's community, as selected by Adopt-A-Classroom. The teacher uses the funds to purchase supplies and resources that increase opportunity for student success. Adopt-A-Classroom cultivates communication between donor and classroom for a meaningful partnership experience that is most often renewed annually. To learn more visit www.adoptaclassroom.com.

Adopt-A-Classroom works within several large school districts including New York City, Boston and Miami-Dade. In Miami-Dade, the country's 4th largest school district, Adopt-A-Classroom was awarded the *Countywide Partner of the Year* and the *Literacy Award* as the program having the greatest impact on public education and student literacy, respectively.

In specific instances where Adopt-A-Classroom works in collaboration with district leaders, the program has experienced phenomenal success. A most recent example is Monroe County, Florida. Working in direct collaboration with the district superintendent and school board, Adopt-A-Classroom has facilitated the adoption of 66% of the county's classrooms in 5 months, raising over \$200,000. By the end of this school year, at least 75% of all Monroe County classrooms are expected to be adopted, at \$500 per classroom.

Accountability: Adopt-A-Classroom conducts its programming with the highest level of accountability. As noted earlier, 100% of all classroom donations are directed to the classroom; we take 0% out for administration. All funds are transferred to teachers electronically via e-wallet accounts from which teachers access to purchase supplies and resources online. Adopt-A-Classroom captures the purchasing information and remits back to each donor, in real time, an itemized invoice detailing exactly how the teacher used the funds.

Initiative: For maximum results, Adopt-A-Classroom recommends the following action steps to coincide with the beginning of the school year:

1. 1 hour presentation of the Adopt-A-Classroom program to all "Teachers of the Year" from each Stafford County public school. Donation(s) to be secured prior to the presentation so that each teacher leaves the meeting having been adopted with \$500 to spend, re-emphasizing that the program is "for real." Each teacher shall leave with a package of information to disseminate to all other teachers in their respective schools.
2. 1 hour presentation to all business and community leaders. This meeting should include chamber leaders, political leaders, and other relevant community leaders whose knowledge of the initiative can increase opportunity for the initiative's success.
3. Press conference. A press conference announcing the launch of the initiative to harness significant public relations which translates to intensify community awareness.
4. Newspaper buy-in (optional). Helpful in sustaining awareness and momentum is a weekly "scorecard" advertisement in the local newspaper recognizing those donors who adopted classrooms that week. A bi-annual or annual full page recognition ad would be recommended. If the newspaper cannot donate the space, a sponsorship or several could be obtained to underwrite costs in return for logo placement on the advertisements.
5. Spokesperson (optional). While not a requisite, it is always helpful to have a local celebrity lend a face to the initiative. It creates more media attention and adds a special element to the packaging of the initiative.

Adopt-A-Classroom charges a fee for district-wide initiatives. We are well aware of district budget crises and assure you that the fee will not be cost prohibitive. A more detailed quote can be provided once more information is obtained.

Conclusion: Adopt-A-Classroom looks forward to the opportunity to work with Stafford County Public Schools. Our mission is to create meaningful partnerships among community members and classrooms and empower classroom teachers with the resources critical for classroom success.

Contact Information:

James Rosenberg, Founder Executive Director
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CONTENTS

- About Us
- Core Competency
- Programming
- Technology
- Fundraising
- Value Propositions
 - District Administration
 - Community
 - Teachers

ABOUT US

Adopt-A-Classroom is a nationally recognized, award winning 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that assists underserved classrooms across the country.

Founded in 1998, the program's mission is to provide all students equal access to a quality education. Recognizing teachers as the linchpin to student success, Adopt-A-Classroom accomplishes its mission by empowering classroom teachers with community partners and financial support to enrich classroom curriculum and increase opportunity for student achievement.

Adopt-A-Classroom has distributed over \$1 million to underserved classrooms in 35 states.

CORE COMPETENCY

- Adopt-A-Classroom empowers members of the community – individuals, small businesses, and large corporations alike – to provide moral and financial assistance to classrooms.
- Reasonable donation request - \$500 per classroom.
- Minimum energy investment required to participate.

PROGRAMMING

- Donor either selects classroom(s) of choice or, when donation is not earmarked, Adopt-A-Classroom directs donation to a Title I classroom within donor's community.
- 100% of donation goes to the classroom; Adopt-A-Classroom takes 0% for administration.
- For companies that adopt several classrooms, Adopt-A-Classroom partners individual employees with adopted classrooms. As a result, goodwill benefits of the corporate donation is realized by employees throughout entire school year.
Adopt-A-Classroom has several partners that have made \$30,000 - \$100,000 contributions to adopt dozens and hundreds of classroom at a time. Such partners include, Nantucket Nectars, Boston Red Sox, Florida Marlins and Knight Foundation.
- Donors may specify curriculum area classrooms, i.e. art, special needs, etc.

PROGRAMMING

- Adopt-A-Classroom cultivates communication between donor and classroom creating a meaningful partnership experience.
- Adopt-A-Classroom sends each donor a "Certificate of Adoption" containing complete classroom biographical information.
- Each donor receives a minimum of two "appreciation" e-mails from the classroom teacher – when funds are received and when resources are purchased. Over 90% of classroom sponsors continue an email dialogue with the teachers throughout the school year.
- Teachers are encouraged to invite donors to visit the classroom. Scheduling is left to donors and teachers to manage. Over 50% of classroom sponsors visit their adopted classroom.
- Over 80% of classroom sponsors renew annually.

TECHNOLOGY

- Adopt-A-Classroom facilitates its programming utilizing a proprietary web platform. The platform enables anyone in the community to select, adopt and make direct financial donations to classrooms online. Funds are received by teachers in real time and can be used to purchase classroom resources immediately. (Donors may opt to make donations by phone and mail.)
- No cash is transacted. Teachers receive funds electronically via e-wallet accounts and shop online within network of vendors. (Teachers may choose to go outside network if preferred).
- Adopt-A-Classroom captures purchasing information and remits detailed invoices to donors providing 100% accountability of all donations. Such teacher purchasing information is also made available to the school district.

FUNDRAISING

- **Teacher-generated:** Upon registering on web site, teachers are provided unique homepages with email and printable outreach tools to inform circle of family, friends and contacts about Adopt-A-Classroom. Approximately 50% of classroom sponsors are teacher-generated.
- **Initiative-based:** Adopt-A-Classroom focuses its efforts on initiatives that serve targeted districts or communities.
- **Administration-supported:** Adopt-A-Classroom works with district administrations to maximize programming success. In Boston, Adopt-A-Classroom is working with BPS, Mayor Thomas Menino, and Red Sox shortstop Nomar Garciaparra; in Miami, Adopt-A-Classroom is working with MDCPS, Mayor Manny Diaz, Florida Marlins and several other partners. In administrative-supported initiatives, Adopt-A-Classroom has facilitated adoptions for up to 75% of district classrooms.

ATTACHMENT 1

From: "James Rosenberg" <jrosenberg@adoptaclassroom.com>
To: "Cathy Tanner" <clynnt@hotmail.com>, <ctanner@staffordschools.net>
Date: 2/5/04 1:45PM
Subject: RE: Follow up - Stafford County Public Schools

Hi Cathy:

Thank you for the information. Adopt-A-Classroom's standard fee is \$500 per school. Therefore, with 24 schools in Stafford County (we won't include the 5 under construction), the fee would be \$12,500. This is a one-time fee, and will not be a recurring annual fee. This fee helps us cover costs of travel and other initiative-related costs that we invest to ensure maximum success.

We guarantee that by working together with you, the initiative will raise a minimum of \$12,500 from community members into schools. Should it not, we will refund any difference back to the district.

Adopt-A-Classroom is very excited about the potential of working with Stafford County Public Schools, and delivering the same success to your district as we have in Monroe County and others. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and discussing next steps.

Best regards,
Jamie

James Rosenberg

Founder, Executive Director

Adopt-A-Classroom

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VALUE PROPOSITION

Teachers



- Simple. No requisition forms.
- Minimum time investment.
- Real dollars in their hands to purchase resources.
- Full purchasing discretion.
- Empowerment.

VALUE PROPOSITION

Community



- Accountable.
- Simple. User-friendly. Easy to understand.
- Direct. No bureaucracy. No red tape.
- Immediate returns.

VALUE PROPOSITION

District Administration

- Significant return on investment opportunity.
- Minimum resource investment required.
- Turnkey. Adopt-A-Classroom manages entire process.
- Powerful viral fundraising opportunity.